

Message Text

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ORIGIN HA-05

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EA/TIMBS - MR. MEINHEIT
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
INFO AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY SEOUL

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SHUM, TH

SUBJECT:PROPOSED LEGISLATION TO AUTHORIZE USG ASSISTANCE
TO AMERASIAN CHILDREN IN THAILAND

1. SENATOR HARRISON WILLIAMS (D. - NJ) HAS INTRODUCED A
BILL, S.2555, "TO AUTHORIZE ASSISTANCE TO CERTAIN DISADVANTAGED
CHILDREN IN THAILAND," ON WHICH FOREIGN RELATIONS
COMMITTEE HAS REQUESTED EXECUTIVE BRANCH VIEWS. TEXT OF
BILL AND PROPOSED LETTER TO SFRC FOLLOW, FOR EMBASSY'S INFO
AND COMMENTS.

2. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF BILL: QUOTE BE IT ENACTED BY THE
SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED STATES
OF AMERICA IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED, THAT (A) IT IS THE SENSE
OF THE CONGRESS THAT INADEQUATE PROVISION HAS BEEN MADE
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FOR --

(1) THE ESTABLISHMENT, EXPANSION, AND IMPROVEMENT OF
DAY CARE CENTERS, ORPHANAGES, HOSTELS, SCHOOL FEEDING PRO-
GRAMS, HEALTH AND WELFARE PROGRAMS, AND TRAINING RELATED
TO THESE PROGRAMS WHICH ARE DESIGNED FOR THE BENEFIT OF
CHILDREN IN THAILAND WHO HAVE BEEN DISADVANTAGED BY HOSTILI-
TIES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA OR CONDITIONS RELATED TO THOSE HOS-

TILITIES; AND

(2) THE ADOPTION BY UNITED STATES CITIZENS OF CHILDREN IN THAILAND WHO ARE ORPHANED OR ABANDONED, OR WHOSE PARENTS OR SOLE SURVIVING PARENT, AS THE CASE MAY BE, HAS IRREVOCABLY RELINQUISHED ALL PARENTAL RIGHTS, PARTICULARLY CHILDREN FATHERED BY UNITED STATES CITIZENS.

(B) THE PRESIDENT IS AUTHORIZED TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE, ON TERMS AND CONDITIONS HE CONSIDERED APPROPRIATE, FOR THE PURPOSES DESCRIBED IN PARAGRAPHS (1) AND (2) OF SUBSECTION (A).

SEC. 2. (A) TO CARRY OUT THIS ACT, THERE IS AUTHORIZED TO BE APPROPRIATED FOR EACH OF THE FISCAL YEARS BEGINNING OCTOBER 1, 1979, AND OCTOBER 1, 1980, THE SUM OF \$500,000 OR ITS EQUIVALENT IN LOCAL CURRENCY.

(B) NO MORE THAN 10 PER CENTUM OF THE FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE TO CARRY OUT THIS ACT MAY BE EXPENDED FOR THE PURPOSES REFERRED TO IN SUBSECTION (A) (2) OF THE FIRST SECTION OF THIS ACT. ASSISTANCE PROVIDED UNDER THIS ACT SHALL BE FURNISHED, TO THE MAXIMUM EXTENT PRACTICABLE, UNDER THE AUSPICES OF AND BY INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES OR PRIVATE VOLUNTARY AGENCIES. END TEXT.

3. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF PROPOSED LETTER: QUOTE DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN:

WE APPRECIATE THE OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT ON S. 2555, "TO AUTHORIZE ASSISTANCE TO CERTAIN DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN UNCLASSIFIED

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IN THAILAND" INTRODUCED BY SENATOR WILLIAMS ON FEBRUARY 22, 1978. THE BILL EXPRESSES THE SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT INADEQUATE PROVISION HAS BEEN MADE FOR ESTABLISHMENT AND IMPROVEMENT OF FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS FOR THE BENEFIT OF CHILDREN IN THAILAND WHO HAVE BEEN DISADVANTAGED BY RECENT HOSTILITIES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, OR CONDITIONS RELATED TO THOSE HOSTILITIES. IT FURTHER STATES THAT INADEQUATE PROVISION HAS BEEN MADE FOR ADOPTIONS BY U.S. CITIZENS OF ORPHANED OR ABANDONED CHILDREN IN THAILAND, PARTICULARLY THOSE FATHERED BY U.S. CITIZENS. THE BILL AUTHORIZES THE PRESIDENT TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO REMEDY THESE SHORTCOMINGS, AND AUTHORIZES THE SUM OF \$500,000 TO BE APPROPRIATED FOR EACH OF THE FISCAL YEARS BEGINNING OCTOBER 1, 1979 AND OCTOBER 1, 1980 FOR THIS PURPOSE. THE CLEAR OBJECTIVE OF THIS LEGISLATION IS TO PROVIDE MEANS TO ASSIST CHILDREN IN THAILAND FATHERED BY U.S. MILITARY PERSONNEL DURING THE PERIOD OF THE INDOCHINA CONFLICT, WHEN LARGE NUMBERS OF U.S. SERVICEMEN WERE STATIONED IN THAILAND. THESE SO-CALLED "MIXED BLOOD" CHILDREN HAVE HAD A DIFFICULT TIME IN THAILAND WHERE THEY HAVE SUFFERED FROM SOCIAL AS WELL AS LEGAL DISCRIMINATION. IN A RECENT FAVORABLE DEVELOPMENT, THE SUPREME COURT OF THAI-

LAND REVERSED AN EARLIER ORDER DEPRIVING SUCH CHILDREN OF
THEIR CITIZENSHIP, BUT EVEN WITH THEIR LEGAL STATUS RE-

STORED, THEY CONTINUE TO SUFFER SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DIS-
CRIMINATION BECAUSE OF THEIR MIXED PARENTAGE.
PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS LARGELY SUPPORTED BY AMERICAN
CITIZEN CONTRIBUTIONS HAVE BEEN ACTIVE IN ATTEMPTING TO
ASSIST THESE CHILDREN, BUT THEIR MEANS HAVE BEEN LIMITED.
THE PROPOSED LEGISLATION WOULD PROVIDE A WAY FOR THE U.S.
GOVERNMENT TO CONTRIBUTE TO ASSISTING THESE CHILDREN IN
THAILAND, AND ALSO TO HELPING FACILITATE THEIR ADOPTION
BY U.S. CITIZENS WHERE THAT MAY BE APPROPRIATE. THESE
APPEAR TO BE WORTHY GOALS, AND WE ARE GLAD TO EXPRESS
OUR SUPPORT FOR THIS BILL. END TEXT. VANCE
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